

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for authorizing payment upon delivery of an item comprising:
 - registering each one of a plurality of receiving parties with a transaction module;
 - registering each one of a plurality of sending parties with the transaction module;
 - generating an identifier;
 - associating the identifier with a particular sending party and a particular item;
 - storing data relating to the identifier and the particular sending party in the transaction module;
 - obtaining identifier data at a destination location;
 - correlating the identifier data to a sending party; and
 - authorizing a debit from a selected receiving party's account.
2. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the identifier is generated from a closed system postage meter.
3. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the identifier is generated from an open system postage meter.
4. The method as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising:
 - notifying the receiving party that the debit has occurred.
5. The method as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising:
 - notifying the sending party that the debit has occurred.

6. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the transaction module is maintained by the receiving party.
7. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the transaction module is maintained by the sending party.
8. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the transaction module is maintained by a third party.
9. The method as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising selecting a particular carrier from a plurality of carriers for transporting the item.
10. The method as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising:
receiving confirmation information, at the transaction module, confirming satisfactory delivery, prior to the authorization step.
11. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the identifier is stored as a bar code representation and the obtaining step includes scanning the bar code.
12. An apparatus for authorizing payment for an article comprising:
a transaction facility adapted to store data relating to a plurality of articles, first party information and second party information;
the transaction facility adapted to generate an identifier associated with a particular article; and
the transaction facility adapted to authorize a transaction between an account of the first party and an account of the second party.
13. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the identifier is generated from a closed system postage meter.

14. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the identifier is generated from an open system postage meter.
15. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the transaction facility provides notification to the first party that the transaction has occurred.
16. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the transaction facility provides notification to the second party that the transaction has occurred.
17. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the transaction facility is maintained by the first party.
18. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the transaction facility is maintained by the second party.
19. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the transaction facility is maintained by a third party.
20. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, further comprising a carrier module, adapted to provide a selection of carriers for transporting the article.
21. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, further comprising:
a tracking module, adapted to track the article during transportation of the article.
22. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the identifier is stored as a bar code representation and the bar code is scanned at a second party facility.
23. An apparatus for authorizing payment upon delivery of an item comprising:

means for registering each one of a plurality of receiving parties with a transaction database;

means for registering each one of a plurality of sending parties with the transaction database;

means for generating an identifier;

means for associating the identifier with a particular sending party and a particular item;

means for storing data relating to the identifier and the particular sending party in the transaction database;

means for obtaining identifier data at a destination location;

means for correlating the identifier data to a sending party; and

means for authorizing a debit from a selected receiving party's account.

24. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, wherein the identifier is generated from a closed system postage meter.

25. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, wherein the identifier is generated from an open system postage meter.

26. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, further comprising:
means for notifying the receiving party that the debit has occurred.

27. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, further comprising:
means for notifying the sending party that the debit has occurred.

28. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, wherein the transaction database is maintained by the receiving party.

29. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, wherein the transaction database is maintained by the sending party.

30. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, wherein the transaction database is maintained by a third party.

31. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, further comprising means for selecting a particular carrier from a plurality of carriers for transporting the item.

32. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, further comprising:
means for tracking the item during the transportation of the item from a first location to the destination location.

33. The apparatus as claimed in Claim 23, wherein the identifier is stored as a bar code representation and the means for the obtaining step is a scanner device.